

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Marine Corps University
User's Guide to Marine Corps Values

CORE VALUES

1. Introduction. Everyone lives according to what they feel is worthwhile or according to their value system. A person's value system motivates their thinking and actions. Values and leadership are closely linked. By exploring this connection and understanding the enormous impact of personal values on individual behavior, we should be better equipped as Marine leaders. By understanding human behavior, leaders are more able to analyze, predict, and influence the behavior of their Marines.

2. Overview. Your task in leading this discussion is to help your Marines understand what values are, how they are developed, and the relationship between values and leadership.

3. References

FMFM 1-0, Leading Marines
FM 22-100, Military Leadership

4. Discussion Leader Notes

a. In preparing to lead this discussion, a review of FMFM 1-0, Leading Marines, and Chapter 6, FM 22-100, Military Leadership, should provide some additional insights into values, attitudes, behavior, and the leader's role in influencing these human characteristics. In addition, check with your local film library for Dr. Massey's film "What You Are Is Where You Were When." This 90 minute film explains the value formation theory. Its film number is 68082 DN.

b. This discussion guide is just that, **a guide**, and is not meant to be the "end all" of leadership instruction on the subject, but it does provide the basic points for discussion. Only you, the leader, knows what your unit needs most, and, therefore, you must evaluate what needs to be emphasized, modified, or expanded.

c. When leading this discussion, remember that the effectiveness of the group learning experience is primarily dependent upon your preparation and your ability to fulfill your duties as a discussion leader.

5. Discussion

a. Captain Adolf Von Schell in the book Battle Leadership states:

" . . . as leaders we must have some knowledge of the souls of our soldiers, because the soldier, the living man, is the instrument with which we have to work in war.... No commander lacking in this inner knowledge of his men can accomplish great things."

b. Every leadership effort is affected by the relationship between the values of the leader and those of the led. Values are the keystone to motivation because they influence an individual's perceptions and attitudes. To be effective leaders, we must truly appreciate the importance of values in understanding human behavior. We must not only know our own values, but must also be able to assess the similarities and differences of our subordinates' values.

c. As we deal with our Marines through observing them, talking with their immediate superiors and peers, or by counseling and interviewing them, we first become aware of their values based upon their attitudes and behavior. That behavior will initially suggest to us that they have certain attitudes. After a period of time we will realize that some of those attitudes are founded upon deeply held beliefs or values. Realizing and understanding a Marine's attitudes and values is essential for us to be able to inspire and control that person and will suggest what actions we need to take to deal with that individual or group. The agenda for today's discussion is:

(1) Discuss the development of values, attitudes, and behavior.

(2) Discuss organizational versus individual values.

(3) Define the leader's role in developing attitudes and values.

(4) Discuss several scenarios involving values and behavior.

(5) Show the film, "What You Are Is Where You Were When."

d. Development of values, attitudes, and behavior.

(1) What is the difference between values, attitudes, and behavior? As you discuss each, have the seminar members give personal examples.

(a) Values. Values are basic ideas about the worth or importance of people, concepts, or things. You may place a high value on a family heirloom, such as your grandfather's watch, or on a clean, well maintained car. You may value personal comfort or freedom to travel. You may value a friendship, a relative, or an adult who helped you as you were growing up. Values influence your behavior because you use them to weigh the importance of alternatives. For example, a person who values personal pleasure more than he values a trim, healthy body continually makes choices between eating and exercising that will ultimately result in his becoming overweight and out of shape. Your values guide you in choosing whether to go with your friends to a concert or to a family gathering on your grandfather's 75th birthday.

(b) Attitudes. Attitudes are an individual's or a group's feelings toward something or someone, and are usually expressed or demonstrated in likes and dislikes. Attitudes are not as deeply held as values. Attitudes could possibly be values in the making.

(c) Behavior. A person's or group's behavior is their outward manifestation of either attitudes or values -- the way they act, dress, or speak.

(2) How are values and attitudes developed?

(a) List responses on a chalkboard, or consider drawing a circle representing a person and have participants provide the forces which impact on the person.

(b) Regardless of their personal theories, most researchers agree that we obtain our values and attitudes through our experiences in society. There appears to be some reason to believe that earlier experiences have more impact than later experiences. In our early lives we are all strongly influenced by our parents, our teachers, and our peers. These experiences tend to establish our early attitudes, our likes and dislikes. As these attitudes are reinforced by successive similar experiences, they become our basic foundational values.

Conversely, our values can have a direct effect on our attitudes.

(c) If we value punctuality it will affect our attitude towards other people. For example, if you have two acquaintances who are very similar in their personal makeup except that one is punctual and the other is always late, you will probably have a better attitude toward the one who is punctual; that is, you will probably like him better than the one who is always late. In this case your values have influenced your attitude.

Note: Institutions such as the home and schools exerted great influence on values formation in the past. Is this true today?

(3) What sources influence the values formation of our youth?

(a) Over the past decade, the structure of the American family has seen dramatic changes caused by geographical mobility and changing moral values. The schools' influence on values formation has diminished due to changing social attitudes towards education.

At this point, have each individual make a list of ten values (e.g., freedom, honesty, integrity, etc.) placing those which they feel most strongly about first. After listing their values, have someone explain what they feel contributed most significantly to the development of their values.

(4) Why are values important?

(a) Values are the center of a person's character. Values affect our everyday life and help determine our attitudes and behavior. The influence of values on human behavior is so great that people will fight and sometimes die for their values. An individual's ability to survive under stressful conditions is often strengthened by firmly established personal values.

(b) This was particularly true for POW's. Those who believed in what they were fighting for refused to bend to the demands of their captors. They found strength in their convictions and the will to survive many years of imprisonment.

(5) What is the relationship between values and leadership?

(a) Values are the benchmark for leadership. They are guides to our thinking and behavior and that of our subordinates. If a Marine is left without any guidance or supervision, then

personal values will determine what that Marine will or will not do. Leaders must provide guidance and supervision in order to inspire (reinforce organizational values) and to control (effect behavior) our Marines.

(b) As a leader you have the power to influence the beliefs and values of your Marines by setting the example, by rewarding behavior that supports military values and attitudes and by planning and conducting tough individual and collective training.

e. Organizational versus individual values. So far we have been discussing individual attitudes and values. Do groups have attitudes and values?

(1) Yes. Group attitudes and values usually reflect a consensus of the attitudes and values of the individuals that make up the group. In the case of the Marine Corps, values such as honesty, integrity, and loyalty have been desired traits for many years and have been proven necessary in battle. Keep in mind that it is these and other values which initially attract many young people to join the Marine Corps.

(2) In addition to those mentioned above, what are some other Marine Corps values? (Have the group identify and list the Corps values.)

Marine Corps Values include:

Embodying the leadership traits.
Living the leadership principles.
Being prompt.
Maintaining a neat personal appearance and soldierly bearing.
Accomplishing the mission.
Ensuring troop welfare.
Maintaining discipline and obedience to orders.
Sacrificing individual needs for the benefit of the group.
Working until the job is completed.

(3) Many young men and women come into the Marine Corps with predetermined attitudes which may or may not correlate with our organizational values. Regardless of their prevalent attitudes, recruit training produces a motivated, disciplined, and patriotic Marine; however, once in the FMF they seem to lose some of the spark. Why is this?

(a) Graduate recruits are highly motivated towards the Corps and the standards it represents. They leave the recruit depots with great expectations of receiving from and giving a lot to their Corps. They seek tough training and dynamic leadership. Too often, after reporting to their units, leadership by example diminishes; standards become lowered; training becomes routine and boring; expectations dim; motivation drops; tarnishing sets in. Improperly supervised, the future NCO is often thrown too completely on their own and is not always ready for this situation. They may follow the most influential Marine available, frequently the "sea lawyer" who leads them in the wrong direction. Sometimes they may be promoted too soon and are not prepared for the accelerated responsibilities. Often we blame operational commitments for not conducting leadership training.

(4) More importantly, how can we, through effective leadership, reinforce the recruit training experience?

(a) Command emphasis must be placed on stopping this trend. With the quality of Marines in the Corps today, we must be prepared to challenge these disciplined and spirited Marines who respond magnificently to positive leadership. The DI and boot camp must not be the only significant event in a Marine's active duty experience. Commanders and unit leaders must set the example and ensure that the development of our Marines and NCO's continue when they join a unit. A Marine should find good leadership, a sense of belonging, and meaningful work. Training must be challenging, demanding, interesting, and with a clearly discernible purpose. Leadership by example is a must!

(5) What is a value conflict?

(a) When a Marine's personal values and attitudes differ from those of their leader or the Marine Corps to such an extent that it affects their performance of duty (their behavior), there is a conflict of values; e.g., a young Marine decides that the use of illegal drugs is more important to him than his duty as a Marine not to use or tolerate the use of illegal drugs.

(b) As leaders, an awareness of value conflicts is important to us because such a conflict adversely affects mission accomplishment. It also comprises one of the greatest challenges to leadership: the difficulty of influencing and controlling someone who genuinely disagrees or dislikes what they are required to do (not to use drugs).

(c) How do value conflicts interfere with mission accomplishment?

[1] A Marine with a value conflict may become a disciplinary problem if his/her behavior reflects an indifferent or, in extreme cases, a hostile attitude towards the Corps' authority. Disciplinary problems require a considerable amount of the leader's time and effort, and ultimately affect their time and ability to train good Marines. Marines whose values and attitudes are either parallel to the Corps' or who are self-disciplined enough to "keep themselves in line" are generally the strength of the unit.

[2] Consider the case of a Marine who is continually involved in disciplinary problems. This Marine requires a great deal of the leader's time because he/she must be counseled, watched closely, given office hours, and sometimes discharged -- all of which take time away from the leader; time which should be devoted to their good Marines.

[3] Have the group list some value conflicts they have observed and what characterized the conflict. List may include:

[a] An individual "moonlighting" to give their family more but allowing it to interfere with his Marine Corps career.

[b] An individual working out to get in shape for a marathon to the extent that it is impacting on his/her job performance and interfering with work schedules.

[4] How were the conflicts you observed resolved? Let discussion group members explain various techniques used and discuss their effectiveness. If not brought out during the discussion, mention that value conflicts may be resolved through leadership by example. Eventually, an individual is influenced by the leader's personal example and that of their fellow Marines (peer pressure). Or, if necessary through disciplinary action that sets the example of what will happen if a Marine cannot come to grips with their value conflicts.

[5] Peer pressure is particularly effective in resolving conflicts. The emphasis on resolving value conflicts should be at the section/platoon/company level where the needs of the group must come before the needs of the individual. A Marine

must know that if they wish to belong to a unit, then they must conform. It is up to their fellow Marines to make this clear by not tolerating attitudes or behavior which interfere with unit integrity and mission accomplishment or which bring dishonor to the unit.

f. The leader's role in developing attitudes and values

(1) Why is it important for leaders to understand values? An understanding of values will assist the leader in the following manner:

(a) If the leader has a clear understanding of values and their relationship to their Marines they can fulfill one essential principle of leadership -- "Know your men and look out for their welfare."

(b) Knowing the values of their Marines, leaders can communicate more effectively and provide the proper guidance necessary to effect behavior and ensure discipline. Keep in mind, the leader is primarily concerned with behavior which is enforced through policies, directives, and regulations. Attitudinal changes among subordinates may take place at a later time after behavior patterns have been enforced over a period of weeks or months.

(2) What are the means available to leaders for determining their Marines' values and attitudes?

(a) The means available include:

[1] Interviewing

[2] Observing

[3] Counseling

(3) As leaders can we influence values in our subordinates?

(a) In our leadership role we can influence our subordinates by gaining their respect. In other words, what we are and what we portray are vital to our success. Marines want to emulate good leaders. The leader must clarify organizational values and emphasize and explain the requirement for strict adherence to the same. It is essential that leaders consistently protect their support of these values in what they say and what

they do, i.e. by setting the example. Saying one thing and doing another is the quickest way to torpedo credibility and to deal a deathblow to one's value as a leader.

(4) How can a leader go about helping his/her subordinates to better understand their values?

(a) Leaders can talk with their Marines and help them better understand what their goals are and what is important to them. The leader should help his Marines to:

[1] Identify their goals.

[2] Identify things and concepts that are important to them.

[3] Prioritize those things and concepts that are important to them based upon their goals.

(5) Why is it useful to you as a leader to help your Marines identify and clarify their values?

(a) Once a Marine's values are correctly identified and clarified based on firm goals, a more predictable and consistent behavior pattern results. The leader can then plan how to lead this Marine in the most successful manner to accomplish his/her individual and unit goals.

(6) Can a leader change or modify a Marine's values when they experience a value conflict?

(a) Yes. But it is difficult to change values and beliefs, and leaders should not expect it to happen overnight. It takes time!

(b) Sometimes a significant emotional event (e.g., war, heroic acts, love, etc.) can speed up the process. Sometimes a leader, particularly one whom the follower considers to be significant, can be tremendously influential and bring about amazing change. But generally it takes time, concern, persistence, hard work, and positive leadership by example.

(c) Where a value conflict exists, a leader must enforce behavior and at the same time provide knowledge which will help the individual resolve the conflict. Consider this situation:

(d) Some individuals value their individual freedoms to the point that this individualism conflicts with the Corps' values, norms or standards. Such an example is long hair and an individual Marine's concern with conforming more with civilian standards for appearance. Often, in their strong desire to "fit in" to society and express individual freedom, they risk getting into trouble in the Corps by not conforming to appearance standards. In this situation a leader must:

[1] Enforce behavior. The leader uses discipline to affect the Marine's behavior directly (orders him to get a proper haircut). In this case it is hoped that an enforced behavior pattern repeated often enough will result in an ultimate change of attitudes and values.

[2] Provide knowledge. The leader should help the Marine to better understand their relationship to society, and explain that in the Corps certain individual freedoms must be set aside for the good of the Corps. By enforcing a desired behavior, leaders fulfill their responsibility to enforce the Corps' standards, and by providing additional knowledge/insights to the individual, help Marines to develop a positive attitude which may eventually resolve the value conflict.

(7) Can a unit influence a Marine's values?

(a) Yes. When people join a new group they want to be accepted and make friends. A Marine new to a unit will go along with group norms (organizational values) in order to be accepted. They will adjust to the norms by adopting the beliefs and values that underlie them. That's why the way Marines are received in a unit is so important.

g. Scenarios involving values and behavior.

The following scenarios are intended to highlight possible situations Marines may encounter. These scenarios will get people thinking about values and how values and attitudes affect behavior when an individual has a decision to make. Let several seminar members express their views and thoughts on the following:

(1) The BST will be given tomorrow and you need to study in order to pass it. You feel if you study real hard, you can "ace" it, and know it will help towards promotion. A friend wants you to go with him to the club stating you know that stuff

and will be able to pass it. You haven't relaxed in the club in a week. What do you do? What values are involved?

(2) You've finally gotten out of debt and have been wanting for a long time to participate in the Tuition Assistance (TA) program and improve your education. But you've recently met this young woman who has been very nice to you. She says she is divorced; she has two young children. They all like you very much. They don't seem to have many material things and always seem to need money. You know if you get in too deep you won't be able to participate in TA. What will you do? What are the important issues here?

(3) It is sunup and your six man patrol has just been hit about 1000 meters away from your combat outpost. Your patrol killed the nine enemy soldiers that hit you, but you see about 15 or 20 more enemy heading towards your position from about 300 meters away. Three of your men and the corpsman were killed, and the fifth wounded badly. He's in great pain and begs you to kill him and "make it" before the enemy reinforcements arrive. You don't think he's wounded that badly and believe he has a good chance to survive if he gets medical help. You know you'll have to carry him, however, and it'll slow you down to the extent the enemy may be able to catch up before you get back "home." You are certain you can make it back by yourself. What values are at play in this scenario?

(4) It is 1900 and you've just reported aboard after a long journey and are tired, especially from lugging the sea bag everywhere you go. No one met or briefed you, and the Duty NCO flatly told you to find a rack somewhere in Building 212 and report to the first sergeant at 0730 tomorrow. When you finally find the building and locate a rack, LCpl Blivit, a fast talking, pleasant, friendly but un-squared away looking Marine greets you and wants to buy you some "welcome aboard" drinks at the club. Your gear is in your sea bag and needs a lot of work to get it squared away. You would like to look good when you see the first sergeant tomorrow, but you're beat and could really use something cool to drink. LCpl Blivit is the only Marine who's been nice to you. What will the decision be? What values are at work in this scenario?

(5) You're married and have been unaccompanied in Okinawa for two months and have four more months to go. To this point you have been spending your evenings at the hobby shop, the library, or just writing letters to your wife. Last night a couple of the guys asked you to go on liberty. You were feeling

a little down, and a couple of beers sounded like a good idea, so you joined your friends at a bar out in town. After a few drinks one of the girls asked you to dance, you accepted, and continued dancing and drinking with her till closing time. As you were leaving the bar, she said that she hoped she would see you again tomorrow night and you said, "For sure." The next day you boasted to all your friends about the good time you had last evening, but said you would not go back to the bar again this evening. About 1400 you get a call from the young lady you were with last evening asking if you were coming back tonight. How do you handle this situation? What's important here?

(6) You are the pilot in command of a single helicopter which has been diverted for an emergency extraction of a recon team. You make contact with the team and plan your approach for the pickup. Just as you land in the zone, you start taking heavy automatic weapons fire. The recon team makes for your helo as the fire becomes more intense. As soon as you get the six Marines aboard your aircraft, your crew chief says "Take Off!" As you lift off to clear the zone, the crew-chief comes up on the ICS (intercommunication system) again and tells you that the team leader just informed him that you left two men in the zone -- two men who were providing protective fire for the others who boarded the aircraft. The team leader wants you to go back to get them. What do you do? What factors are involved?

h. Show the film "What You Are Is Where You Were When."

(1) Dr. Massey's film focuses on an area of leadership frequently overlooked and ignored, i.e., the importance of values and how they are developed. This film is provided for the discussion group to assimilate the concept that values are not only an important consideration for a leader, but also shape the leader's behavior and those of his Marines in many ways.

(2) Introduce the film. Use the film synopsis, to prepare some opening remarks. Films may be found at your public library, the base library, or at TAVSC.

Important! Emphasize that Dr. Massey speaks rapidly and does not look like John Wayne, so you must listen closely, especially during the first few minutes of the film. Once you get used to his pace and style, there should be no problem.

(3) If possible, after the film hand out copies of the synopsis of Dr. Massey's presentation, "What You Are Is Where You Were When" to those who ask for it.

(4) Does anyone have comments on Dr. Massey's theory?

Emphasize that this is just one approach aimed at explaining values imprinting, role modeling and socialization factors. Pursue any objections or new ideas, but do not let the seminar get bogged down since there are many acceptable theories. The main points are that people have different values and behave (differently) according to their values.

i. Summary

(1) Recap the main points made by the group.

(2) When leaders understand the development and role of values and attitudes, they are in a more favorable position to deal with the behavioral problems of their Marines. When leaders acknowledge that their Marines will not always act and react as the leader does, or that they will not understand things or feel about them as the leader does, then leaders can approach new situations and their Marines more intelligently and helpfully.

(3) Values and attitudes are learned. When leaders establish mutual understanding between their Marines and themselves, they have helped create favorable attitudes toward suitable values.

(4) Our profession provides each of us with a superstructure of values designed to assist us in carrying out our duties and functions as Marine professionals. Unquestionably, we will sometimes find ourselves in circumstances where personal and professional value systems conflict. In such instances, adherence to our professional values must take precedence.

6. Appendices. None